AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

In step 2 of Fig. 6, the term "madical" has been amended to "medical". Also, the term "wating" has been amended to "waiting" in both occurrences. Therefore, please replace the attached first drawing sheet for the original drawing sheet including Fig. 6.

Also, in Fig. 7, the term "imformation" has been amended to "information". Therefore, please replace this attached second drawing sheet for the original drawing sheet including Fig. 7.

Attachments: Replacement Drawing Sheets for Fig. 6 and Fig. 7

REMARKS

By this amendment, the specification has been editorially amended, Figs. 6-7 have been amended and claims 1-19 have been amended in the application. Currently, claims 1-19 are pending in the application.

The specification was objected to because the title was not descriptive. By this amendment, the title has been amended to "MEDICAL EXAMINATION SYSTEM FOR SCHEDULING AN APPOINTMENT FOR PATIENTS". Applicants respectfully submit that the amended title is now proper and this objection should be withdrawn.

The Examiner stated that the drawings were objected to because the term "madical" in Fig. 6, included a typographical error. By this amendment, element 52 of Fig. 6 has been amended from "madical" to "medical". It is respectfully submitted that this drawing objection has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 9 and 10 were objected to because claims 9 and 10 were duplicates. By this amendment, claim 10 has been amended to depend from independent claim 11. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that this objection should be withdrawn.

Claims 4 and 14 were rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description

requirement. The Examiner stated that claims 4 and 14 were required to clarify as to how the claimed system can provide appointment cancellation notices to patients who have not made an appointment; for a patient that does not have appointment cannot have the non-existent appointment canceled or subsequently receive a cancellation notification for a non-existent appointment. By this amendment, claims 4 and 14 have been amended and these amendments include reciting "means for providing notices of cancellation to patients who have been queued in the waiting queue means and have not scheduled an appointment". It is respectfully submitted that these amendments overcome this rejection and it should be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 4, 11, 14 and 19 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Regarding claims 4 and 14, the Examiner believed that the disclosure does not clearly define the phrase "made appointment". By this amendment, claims 4 and 14 have been amended from the phrase "made appointment" to "scheduled an appointment". The specification has been similarity clarified.

Regarding claims 1, 11 and 19, the Examiner believed that the disclosure did not clearly define the phrase "virtual reality". By this amendment, the phrase "virtual reality" has been deleted in claims 1, 11 and 19. It is respectfully

submitted that this rejection has been overcome by these amendments and it should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Hirsch et al. (WO 97/25682) in view of Tognazzini (U.S. Patent No. 5,790,974) and further in view of Wayne et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,006,983).

This rejection is respectfully traversed in view of the amendments to the claims and the remarks below.

The present invention relates to a medical examination system that manages the order of patients waiting for a medical examination so as to minimize the time that is required from the start to the end of the medical examination of the patients in an on-site medical examination (see page 1, lines 6-10 of the specification).

Specifically, the present invention discloses that FIG. 1 shows an entire site 1 of a medical examination, a server 11, medical examination items 12A to 12D and personal computers (hereinafter referred to as PCs) that have wireless interfaces installed at the site of each of the medical examination items 12A1 to 12D1. The server 11 has a scheduler 111 that includes a waiting queue means 114 for individual medical examination items and a waiting queue means 115 for individual patients and the function of a wireless communication means. A plurality of

displays 112 form guidance information for receiving the medical examination which mainly include the appointment contents of the scheduler 111. Portable-type wireless display devices 113 correspond to the displays. The patients go around the medical examination site carrying a wireless display device 1131 or 1132, respectively (see page 7, line 11 - page 8, line 3 of the specification).

Fig. 2 shows a detailed configuration example of a waiting queue means 114 for individual medical examination items of the scheduler 111 shown in Fig. 1. The waiting queue means 114 for individual medical examination items manages the waiting line queue 114Q of the patients for each of the medical examination items 12A to 12D (see page 8, line 22 - page 9, line 6 of the specification).

Fig. 3 shows a detailed configuration example in the case that the scheduler 111 shown in Fig. 1 schedules an appointment by utilizing the waiting queue means 115 for individual patients and the waiting queue means 114 for individual medical examination items (see page 10, lines 2-6 of the specification). FIGS. 6 and 7 show flow charts of the case where a medical examination appointment process for a new patient (idn) is carried out by the scheduler 111 shown in FIG. 3 by utilizing the waiting queue 114Q for individual medical examination items shown

in FIGS. 2 or 4 and the waiting queue 115Q for individual patients shown in FIG. 3 (see page 14, lines 16-21 of the specification).

The present invention also discloses that when a patient receives a wireless display device 1131, the wireless display device 1131 reads out the medical examination appointment contents of the corresponding idn of the waiting queue 115Q of the scheduler means 111 which have been registered at the reception and forms medical examination guidance information that indicates the route, the starting and finishing time and a map of the premises on one of the displays 112. Then, the data are transmitted to the corresponding wireless display device 1131 so as to be displayed and the guidance information is updated whenever a medical examination item is completed (see page 24, line 18 - page 25, line 5).

By this amendment, independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended in line with the Examiner's suggestions on page 37 of the office action. Specifically, they have been amended to recite "a server including a plurality of displays, said plurality of displays being capable of displaying guidance information including appointments included in a scheduler and displaying information from said respective wireless display devices, a wireless communication means for communicating with said

respective wireless display devices". Also, independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to recite "said wireless display devices display the waiting queues for the respective patient as a queue data structure and guidance relating to a medical examination route in a form of at least one of dynamic maps and directions to a next scheduled medical examination item appointment to individual patients via said wireless communication means of said server".

Similarly, independent claim 19 has been amended to recite "providing a server including a plurality of displays, the plurality of displays being capable of displaying guidance information including appointments included in a scheduler and displaying information from the respective wireless display devices, a wireless communication means for communicating with the respective wireless display devices". Also, independent claim 19 has been amended to recite "displaying the waiting queues for the respective patient as a queue data structure and guidance relating to a medical examination route in a form of at least one of dynamic maps and directions to a next scheduled medical examination item appointment to individual patients from the server".

These features are not shown or suggested by Hirsch et al., Tognazzini, Wayne et al. or any combination of these references.

Hirsch et al. relate to optimal scheduling systems and booking systems, and more particularly to optimal scheduling systems especially suited for hospitals and clinics.

Hirsch et al. disclose that a computer implemented method of optimal scheduling of a plurality of medical procedures by a plurality of surgeons in a set of operating rooms includes the steps of identifying the resources required for performing each of the plurality of medical procedures and determining every feasible schedule for the plurality of medical procedures, taking into account predetermined resource and scheduling preferences and availability (see page 4, lines 7-13).

Hirsch et al. also disclose that the computer implemented optimal scheduling method includes the steps of assigning priorities to the surgeons and to the medical procedures and optimizing the scheduling of the plurality of medical procedures for a given day in accordance with priorities and present optimality criteria to obtain at least one optimal schedule for that day (see page 6, lines 10-14).

Hirsch et al. also disclose that there are a few hardware considerations which are common to different computer platforms: an ink jet or laser printer, a bar code reader (if data entry is to be done using bar code scanning), the appropriate paging

software and hardware (if auto paging of personnel is desired) (see page 14, lines 1-6).

Hirsch et al. do not disclose the amended features in claims 1, 11 and 19.

In the office action on page 37, the Examiner admitted that the combination of the elements in the present invention and their specific application to the scheduling of on-site medical examinations in a mobile and dynamic environment appears to be allowable over the cited prior art. Specifically, the Examiner stated that the present invention discloses that an on-site mobile medical examination scheduling system and method for the scheduling of one or more patient medical examinations, the medical examinations having associated medical examinations, the medical examinations having associated medical examination items (e.g. equipment, stations, resources, etc.), in a dynamic environment (changing/non-static locations of medical examination items) wherein the system: represents patients and medical examination item schedules as queue data structures; and provides each patient with a wireless handheld device, in communication with the central system/server, that enables the user and the system to monitor their medical examination schedule (e.g. progress) and provide/receive route guidance in the form of

dynamic maps/directions to the next scheduled medical examination item appointment.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to the claims (especially independent claims 1, 11 and 19) include and clarify the allowable features as the Examiner stated in the office action.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that Hirsch et al., Tognazzini, and Wayne et al., individually or in combination, do not teach, disclose or suggest the presently claimed invention and it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine these references to render the present claims obvious.

Applicants also respectfully submit that the features claimed in independent claims 1, 11 and 19 define over the prior art of record and allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

In view of foregoing claim amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance and an action to this effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding the amendments or these remarks, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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